

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, April 26, 1917, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1331 Connecticut Avenue. Washington, D. C. Thursday, April 26, 1917. My darling little boysie:

Your letters make me so happy. But I don't like this separation and if you aren't coming soon I will go to you. Just now it's so cold that I've no desire for further chilliness. And it's fun being in the rush of things. Being (supposedly) in the country. Elsie is here constantly and her children also so I see more of them than all winter and they bring full blasts from the outside world.

It's pessimistic through and through, there seems no light anywhere. Horrible stories are told of the condition of the ruined villages evacuated by the Germans and yet they force one's reluctant admiration when one hears that they are still able to hold their own and that it will yet be years before the war is ended. And every paper preaches economy in food and the need of ships, and it's the burden of every talk. I told you Lane predicts the German occupation of Petrograd within a month and the fear is great that Russia will be forced into a separate peace which means throwing the weight of her uncounted millions against us. I do hope if Casey has the least genius for boat building he will stay and develop it. They say it's that they want, not more men.

I was up until 3 A. M. getting up posters for Baby Week and have divided my time today between continuing that, helping Elsie 2 write a resolution of her 20 th Cent Club endorsing selected draft, to send to heads of Com ees , signing my name another 200 times etc. Read the article the new Ency. Brit. on Conscription written before the war. The remarks on the effect of the system on Prussia is very interesting and gives food for thought. It looks as if it were the explanation of the power of Germany indirectly as well as directly. The soldiers expectation of life is 5 years more than that of ordinary men and he

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is also better educated and more intelligent and the women prefer him. While conscription seems to me the only possible thing now it certainly has its dangers. Can we avoid them? Elsie says congressmen advocate the volunteer system because it provides graft. They appoint officers, by conscription it is in the hands of the General Staff.

I am glad Kathleen got safely home and the children their toys and I hope Ferguson has the tapestry for the library furniture.

Gretchen is nearly dead from overwork at my hands and at the Navy League.

Mr. McCurdy is still in Washington and his wife has been with Mrs. Melville Bell and he says the letter might come down here if there were any chances of her seeing us both. Is there? Please let me know. Do your affairs necessitate your coming down before settling for the summer? For I don't want to arrange to leave if you are returning for a while anyway independent of me.

Much love Mabel. Your heating arrangement's very interesting. How long would it take 3 to dry stockings by candle light, for I should imagine the supply of candles was limited. A boat that would go over mines and attack German ships in the harbor would simply be catastrophic.